



CCM 2013 Testimony

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AGING COMMITTEE

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The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) is Connecticut's statewide association of towns and cities and the voice of local government - your partners in governing Connecticut. Our members represent over 92% of Connecticut's population. We appreciate the opportunity to testify on bills of interest to towns and cities.

SB 886, "An Act Concerning Aging in Place"

CCM opposes Section 5 of this bill because it would increase costs to towns and cities by mandating additional requirements within local plans of Conservation and Development, as defined in CGS 8-23. Further, we are not sure of the implications of such a "one-size-fits-all" approach.

SB 886 would, among other things, require that municipalities:

- Permit home sharing in single-family zones between up to four adult persons of any age with disabilities or who are sixty years of age or older, whether or not related, who receive supportive services in the home.
- Allow accessory apartments for persons with disabilities or persons sixty years of age or older, or their caregivers, in all residential zones, subject to municipal zoning regulations concerning design and long-term use of the principal property after it is no longer in use by such persons.
- Expand the definition of "family" in single-family zones to allow for accessory apartments for persons sixty years of age or older, persons with disabilities or their caregivers

Updating local plans of conservation and development is an expensive enterprise. And, adding several additional, complicated requirements will make it more expensive.

We are also uncertain whether the State has ensured that the elderly will have all the support necessary for them – the same level of care they would have if they were in a facility.

Let's be honest: the State has a dubious history with efforts to place persons from state facilities into communities. The State has a history of not ensuring that persons have the all social, medical, nutritional, transportation and emergency service and emotional support to truly enable people to live quality, independent lives.

CCM is aware of the difficult budget situation the state is currently in and of the rising cost of caring for an increasingly elderly population. However, the State must not impose mandates on communities and must have concrete policies to ensure that the elderly have all the social and other support they need.

CCM was encouraged by the recommendations submitted by the *Task Force to Study Aging in Place* on December 28, 2012. Included in the final report was the recommendation to *encourage* municipalities to include planning for the needs of older adults and persons with disabilities, including those with low incomes, and their ability to age in place in their Plans on Conservation and Development. *A state mandate was not included in the recommendations.*

CCM would ask that Committee use the task force's approach of encouragement and incentives, rather than a one-size-fits-all mandated approach.

CCM recommends that before any changes are mandated to Plans on Conservation and Development, the state ensure that the necessary infrastructure exists to accommodate the requirements to ensure safe aging in place. The infrastructure needed to ensure the safe transition of the elderly to an aging in place model include, adequate numbers of nurses, home health aides, emergency and non-emergency medical transportation services.

CCM looks forward to working with the Committee to fashion a proposal that ensures that the State has a tight social infrastructure in place to support the elderly and does not contain any unfunded state mandates.

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If you have any questions, please contact M. Randall Collins Jr., Senior Legislative Associate, at rcollins@ccm-ct.org or (203) 498-3053.